

New library director from Palmer, Alaska

The Camas Public Library's new director will officially take over on Jan. 17, after arriving from Palmer, Alaska.

David Zavortink is currently the library director at Palmer Public Library, a position he's held since 1988.

Zavortink was selected from nearly 70 applicants applying for the position from all over the country. The library director's position came open in August when former director Cindy Gibbons accepted a job with Multnomah County Library.

Nikki Maounis, assistant director who has been serving as acting director since Gibbons' departure, said from the 70 applications received, the number was pared down to 17 who were sent a set of questions to answer.

"From the questions, we dropped the number to five and invited them to Camas for an interview," Maounis said. "After the interviews on Nov. 4, the library board made their decision to hire David. He was the first choice and he accepted."

Zavortink, 44, said he was interested in the Camas position because in Alaska there are some limitations to working in libraries.

"The libraries are either small or big, there is no in between," he said. "Camas has about the same volume

rate as Palmer, about 40,000, but the staff and circulation rate is about 50 percent larger in Camas."

Zavortink said he hasn't made any decisions about what changes he would like to see at Camas Public Library. However, he would like to add some adult programs and possibly expand the children's programs.

"In Palmer we have a bedtime story hour once a month and a storytime for younger children. So those are some possibilities of things to do," he said. "Different cultural events such as poets, musical and theater entertainment could be added."

As library director in Palmer, Zavortink has been in charge of writing policies, budgeting, programming, selecting books and working with the city council.

Aside from his current position in Palmer, Zavortink worked as a principal librarian in technical services at Fairbanks North Star Borough for seven years. He also worked at the Valley City State University library in Valley City, N.D., for five years as an assistant professor. At Valley City State University he did cataloging of work and taught library sciences and English.

"I was looking for a profession that allowed me to do a variety of things and work with people and my problem-solving skills, plus have fun," he said. "Those are the primary reasons I went into library science. It's just something I just gravitate toward and I seemed to have what it took."

Zavortink, born and raised in Ohio, received his master's degree in 1976 from Kent State University in library sciences.

Zavortink said his wife, Amy Waite, and their two children, Ivan, 8, and Kira, 2, will move to the area once school in Alaska goes on spring break.